

OPINION 2239 (Case 3383)***Gobius lagocephalus* Pallas, 1770 (currently *Sicyopterus lagocephalus*; Osteichthyes, Teleostei, GOBIIDAE): specific name not suppressed**

Abstract. The Commission did not approve a proposal to suppress the name *Gobius lagocephalus* Pallas, 1770 (currently *Sicyopterus lagocephalus*), commonly used for a species of sicydiine goby.

Keywords. Nomenclature; taxonomy; Teleostei; GOBIIDAE; SICYDIINAE; *Gobius*; *Sicyopterus lagocephalus*; western Atlantic; Indo-West Pacific; goby.

Ruling

- (1) A proposal to suppress the name *Gobius lagocephalus* Pallas, 1770 (currently *Sicyopterus lagocephalus*), was not approved.
- (2) The name *lagocephalus* Pallas, 1770, as published in the binomen *Gobius lagocephalus* Pallas, 1770 and as designated by the neotype (Forschungsinstitut und Naturmuseum Senckenberg, Frankfurt am Main, Germany, SMF 28571) with type locality Ravine St. Gilles on Réunion Island, is hereby placed on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology.

History of Case 3383

An application to suppress the name *Gobius lagocephalus* Pallas, 1770 (currently *Sicyopterus lagocephalus*), commonly used for a species of sicydiine goby, was received from Wm. Leo Smith and John S. Sparks (*American Museum of Natural History, New York, NY 10024, U.S.A*) on 24 May 2006. After correspondence the case was published in BZN 64: 103–107 (June 2007). The title, abstract and keywords of the case were published on the Commission's website. A comment by Kottelat et al. opposing this case and presenting two alternative proposals was published in BZN 65: 57–60. Six additional comments opposing this case were published in BZN 65: 150–151; 309–310.

In their comment, Kottelat et al. (2008) noted that the issue had been recently addressed by Kottelat (2007) and solved by the designation of a neotype, and that a ruling by the Commission was not necessary. Kottelat et al. (2008) proposed that the designation be confirmed by the Commission. This is not necessary, because Kottelat (2007) provided a valid designation under the Code.

Decision of the Commission

On 1 June 2009 the members of the Commission were invited to vote on the proposals published in BZN 64: 106. At the close of the voting period on 1 September 2009 the votes were as follows:

Affirmative votes – 1: Zhou.

Negative votes – 26: Alonso-Zarazaga, Ballerio, Bogutskaya, Bouchet, Brothers, Fautin, Grygier, Halliday, Harvey, Kojima, Kottelat, Krell, Kullander, Lamas, Lim,

Minelli, Ng, Pape, Papp, Patterson, Rosenberg, Stys, Tol, Winston, Yanega and Zhang.

Pyle was on leave of absence.

Fautin, voting AGAINST, said that the comments, which were all against the proposal, made a persuasive case that the situation was now stable, and instability would be induced by suppressing the name. Halliday explained that he voted AGAINST because the matter had already been resolved, in the paper by Kottelat (2007). Kojima, voting AGAINST, agreed that the application was not acceptable for the reasons clearly stated by Kottelat et al. (2008). Similarly, voting AGAINST, Kullander said this was an unnecessary case, and Kottelat et al. (2008) should be followed. Stys voted AGAINST and said he fully agreed with the comment provided by Kottelat et al. (2008). Winston voted AGAINST, and said it is a nomen dubium, but the arguments of both sides seemed to her to be as much political as scientific. Since the most clamorous users are in the Pacific, she said it would seem best for one of them to correctly designate a neotype, if they wanted to keep the name. Ng voted AGAINST, although he agreed with the applicants that there was a big problem. However, he disagreed with the proposed solution of suppressing this name, especially in view of the fact that the name was now in widespread use, and that the taxonomy of this species and its synonyms, some of which may be good species, was still far from settled. He felt that a more rational approach would be to select a suitable neotype that would best keep how the name was in broad use today. It may conflict against the original intent, or purposes, but this was far less important than keeping current usage stable. He also noted that there was no evidence that the purported type locality was correct or even if the original datasets cited were accurate.

Original references

The following is the original reference to the name placed on the Official List by the ruling given in the present Opinion:

lagocephalus, *Gobius*, Pallas, 1770, *Spicilegia Zoologica quibus novae imprimis et obscurae animalium species iconibus, descriptionibus atque commentariis illustrantur*, vol. 1, fasc. 8. Gottl. August. Lange, Berolini, p. 14.

The following is the reference for the designation of the neotype for *Gobius lagocephalus* Pallas, 1770:

Kottelat, M. 2007. *Molecular Phylogenetics and Evolution*, **43**: 693–695.